

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

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EXDIS

FOR AMBASSADOR SIRACUSA FROM AMBASSADOR HILL

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, AR, US

SUBJECT: ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR'S VIEWS ON DEVELOPING SCENE AT HOME

REF: MONTEVIDEO 0524

1. I MUCH APPRECIATED AND HASTEN TO REPLY TO YOUR VERY INFORMATIVE CABLE REPORTING AMBASSADOR DE LA PLAZA'S VIEWS ON THE DEVELOPING SITUATION IN ARGENTINA. DE LA PLAZA IS RESPECTED IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HERE AND HAD A VERY CLOSE, FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EMBASSY WHILE HE WAS DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN POLICY.

2. I HAVE NO BASIC DISAGREEMENTS WITH THE AMBASSADOR'S ANALYSIS. THE SITUATION DOES SEEM TO BE COMING TO A HEAD QUICKLY AND A MILITARY SOLUTION DOES SEEM THE MOST LIKELY. I BELIEVE DE LA PLAZA IS WRONG, HOWEVER, WHEN HE SAYS THE SOLUTION WILL BE A LA BORDABERRY. EARLIER ON THAT SEEMED A STRONG POSSIBILITY, BUT NOT ANYMORE. SEVERAL RELIABLE SOURCES HAVE TOLD US THAT JULIO GONZALEZ, MRS. PERON'S PRIVATE SECRETARY, HAS RECENTLY PUSHED THE IDEA WITH THE MILITARY -- I.E. THAT THEY INCREASINGLY TAKE CONTROL OF THE LEVERS OF POWER, BUT THAT THEY LEAVE MRS. PERON AS PRESIDENT. TO THIS, THE MILITARY ARE REPORTED TO HAVE REPLIED THAT THEY HAVE NO INTENTION OF BEING PLACED IN

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THE POSITION OF PROPPING UP MRS. PERON, EVEN AS A FIGURE-

HEAD.

3. EARLIER, THERE HAD SEEMED A GOOD CHANCE THAT MRS. PERON WOULD BE REMOVED OR WOULD REMOVE HERSELF FROM OFFICE, LEAVING SENATOR LUDER OR SOME OTHER SUCCESSOR IN THE CASA ROSADA. WHOEVER THE SUCCESSOR HAD BEEN, HE WOULD HAVE NEEDED THE FULL BACKING OF THE MILITARY AND A BORDABERRY SITUATION MIGHT WELL HAVE DEVELOPED. ALL THAT NOW SEEMS UNLIKELY. THERE IS STILL A BARE CHANCE THAT THE CONGRESS WILL PULL ITSELF TOGETHER AT THE LAST MINUTE, OUST MRS. PERON AND APPOINT A SUCCESSOR. BUT BASED ON THEIR TRACK RECORD, ONE CAN HAVE LITTLE CONFIDENCE IN THAT OUTCOME. WHAT SEEMS FAR MORE LIKELY IS AN OUT-AND-OUT MILITARY TAKE-OVER.

4. DE LA PLAZA'S REMARKS DO REFLECT ONE ASPECT OF THE SITUATION WHICH WORRIES ME CONSIDERABLY. THE MILITARY ARE TALKING TOO MUCH AND THEY KEEP RAISING DOUBTS AS TO WHETHER WE WILL RECOGNIZE THEM. I WISH THEY WOULD LISTEN MORE AND TALK LESS. TO ALL SUCH QUESTIONS REGARDING OUR ATTITUDE, WE HAVE REPLIED THAT WE UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION HERE, THAT ARGENTINA'S FORM OF GOVERNMENT IS A MATTER FOR THE ARGENTINES THEMSELVES TO WORK OUT, AND THAT THE USG WILL RECOGNIZE ANY GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS THE PREREQUISITES. AT THE SAME TIME, WE ARE ALSO TRYING TO POINT OUT DISCREETLY THAT WHILE WE WOULD SUPPORT A RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT, WHETHER IT BE MILITARY OR CIVILIAN, THAT GOVERNMENT MUST BE CAREFUL TO AVOID HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS IF IT WANTS TO BE SURE OF OUR CONTINUED SUPPORT.

5. I APPRECIATE THE KIND RECEPTION YOU GAVE WAYNE SMITH EARLIER THIS WEEK. HE TELLS ME THE CONSULTATIONS WERE VERY BENEFICIAL. I HOPE RUSSELL OLSON WILL BE COMING OVER THIS WAY SOON.
HILL

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